Wales NHS Doctor Appraisal Portal Needed Hosting with Highest SLAs and Compliance

iomart

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iomart customer case study

iomart provides fully compliant Managed Hosting for Wales Deanery MARS project

industry

Healthcare, medical, public sector

Objective

To find a new hosting provider who would meet data and compliance regulations including those of UK Information Commissioner.

Solution

A dedicated, secure hosting solution from iomart that meets leading industry standards.

Benefits

• Highest quality Service Level Agreement

• Comprehensive accreditations

• Thorough testing of the platform

• Excellent technical support

The Medical Appraisal and Revalidation System (MARS) is a ground-breaking online appraisal portal for the approximately 6300 doctors who work in Wales. It was created by Wales Deanery, which is the School of Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education at Cardiff University, in conjunction with the Welsh Government.

MARS is separated into two dedicated websites, one for those doctors working in General Practice or Primary Care and one for doctors in Secondary Care which covers all non-training grade doctors such as medical consultants in hospitals.

MARS is a sophisticated online appraisal system designed to facilitate the appraisal process and to support individual doctors, Appraisers and Responsible Officers through revalidation. It provides excellent value for money and ensures a consistent, high quality approach to medical appraisal with equal opportunities for all doctors working in Wales. It also incorporates a range of resources through which their continuing professional development can be facilitated.

Mission critical service levels

MARS is a major mission-critical project. It was designed to meet the General Medical Council (GMC) requirements for revalidation and provides one standard I.T. system for medical appraisal and revalidation in Wales which is accessible, reliable and meets all relevant data and compliance regulations.

Paul Kirk, Business Systems Support Unit Manager for Wales Deanery, explains, "We realised that we needed much stronger Service Level Agreements around the project because of its importance for the NHS in Wales and for the university. When our former hosting contract came up for renewal, we took the opportunity to evaluate a number of different providers in a stringent tender exercise and iomart came out on top."

Among the important requirements for the MARS management team were: compliance with the U.K. Information Commissioner's requirements; a data centre that was in the UK; a data centre that could be visited easily by the team; the flexibility to cost-effectively scale up requirements as business imperatives changed; and a managed service which was much more responsive with dedicated round-the-clock technical support. iomart scored highest on all points and was appointed in autumn 2013.

Protecting the data

The hosting provided for MARS by iomart is a dedicated environment with two Dell R320-Intel Xeon Hex-core E5-2430L servers using RedHat Enterprise Linux OS. This is protected by a managed Cisco ASA 5505 firewall with Symantec Endpoint Protection. There is a guaranteed 99.99% uptime with 100% guarantee on the data centre infrastructure. All iomart data centres meet leading international industry standards and carry the following accreditations: ISO 27001:2013 for Information Security Management; ISO 90001:2008 for Quality Management; and ISO 20000-1:2011 for IT Service Management.

MARS allows doctors to maintain a portfolio of supporting information drawn from their practice which demonstrates how they are continuing to meet the requirements set out in the General Medical Council's Good Medical Practice Framework for appraisal and revalidation. As a result iomart also provides managed off-site backup and restore using EMC Avamar for more than 1.5 Tb of storage. The encrypted data is transported via iomart's fully owned and dedicated private dark fibre network.

Total control

The MARS management team still retains full control of the hosting service via iomart's award-winning cloud control portal which incorporates billing and account management, asset management control, real time and historic data, an overall view on current usage and an integrated support ticketing system.

After seven months of testing the new website finally went live in April 2014 while an enhanced version of the project is being rolled out in 2016 which will have an enhanced user interface.

Paul Kirk continues, "We ran the systems in parallel to ensure system availability whilst we tested exhaustively. iomart had set the servers up perfectly according to our specifications and there were no issues. We were really pleased, as it's a sophisticated system and availability is mission critical. We are currently developing a significant enhancement programme and having confidence in our hosting provider is vital to us; iomart is a great business partner."

Quality of service

The MARS project is reviewed periodically to ensure Wales Deanery realises the benefits of changes to business process and enhanced technologies which iomart offers to the organisation.

Paul Kirk concludes, "The quality of the service we get from iomart reaches far beyond our previous experience. We are dealing with fast, responsive and knowledgeable people with whom we have good interactions. The relationship that we have with iomart adds considerable value to our business. The quality of the hosting service and the interactions with us are excellent. In comparison to our previous experiences, we now have a level of service from iomart that is second to none."

For more information about MARS visit: www.marswales.org For more information about the Wales Deanery visit: www.walesdeanery.org

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